APPENDIX TO ANNEX 1

INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL POSITION STATEMENT
REPORT OF PROGRESS (8 NOV 2019)

The Independent Expert panel, has analysed IPCC capability to conduct a rigorous Inquiry of the policing of protest in Hong Kong, and indicated a shortfall in IPCC powers, capacity, and independent investigative capability necessary to match the scale of events and the standards required of an international police watchdog operating in a society that values freedoms and rights.

The Independent Expert Panel conducted a stock-take this week which reveals some advance by the IPCC Taskforce, but structural limitations in the scope and powers of the IPCC Inquiry remain, inhibiting its ability to establish a coherent and representative body of evidence.

The stock-take concludes that the IPCC needs to substantially enhance its capacity: to assemble a coherent account of the facts from police and other bodies; to access important documents and validate accounts supplied by police and others in a timely fashion; and to significantly improve its capability to identify and secure evidence from key witnesses from outside policing.

Given the scale of events in Hong Kong it remains to be seen whether a light touch, oversight body like the IPCC, can make sufficient progress to produce any decisive contribution to an account of developments, that might enable necessary policy changes in policing practice.

As a group we believe it may be possible to provide an interim report with limited, but sufficient facts to allow preliminary conclusions to be drawn on some of the drivers of protest, the handling of key events, and the evolution of the disturbances.

But for that to happen, the IPCC will have to revise its resources and processes. It remains to be seen by whether it can do this in short order. If it can, we believe it may provide a compelling case for the next steps including a deeper more comprehensive inquiry in a number of respects by an independent body with requisite powers, but also enable action to commence on improvements that can be made in the shorter term.